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The FAITHFUL MINISTER Encouraged.

A

SERMON,

Preached at the Opening of the *SYNOD* of of NEW-YORK, met at *Philadelphia*, *October* 1. 1755.

By JAMES DAVENPORT, A. M. late Minister of the Gospel at *Southwold*, on *Long-Island*, now at *Hope-well*, in *New-Jersey*.

Published at the Request of some of the Hearers.

COL. iv. 17. *And say to* Archippus, *Take heed to the Ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.*

1 TIM. iv. 16. *Take heed unto thy Self, and unto thy Doctrine: Continue in them: For in doing this, thou shalt both save thy Self, and them that hear thee.*

1 PET. v. 4. *And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a Crown of Glory, that fadeth not away.*

PHILADELPHIA:

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PREFACE.

Candid READER,

THE *following* Sermon *needs no Commendation. The Truth, Weight and Seaſonableneſs of its Matter, the Sobriety of its Stile, the Modeſty of its Addreſs, together with the Spirit of Piety, of Humility, of undiſguiſed Zeal for God, and affectionate Love to Man, which breathes in every Part, and animates the Whole, will commend it to the Conſciences of all that fear God, who have the Pleaſure of peruſing it. Here are no high ſounding Words of Vanity, or little Artifices to exalt himſelf, and catch a vulgar Applauſe; but an honeſt, ſerious Endeavour to honor God, and do good to Mankind.——Let not the pious Author be offended with our Freedom, in ſaying, that his Life adds Weight to this Diſcourſe; for the Latter is but a Copy of the Former: Nor ſhould it be forgotten, that the gracious God, who delights to honor the Humble and Sincere in Heart, gave manifeſt Tokens of his ſpecial Preſence, when this Diſcourſe was delivered: Not only the Speaker, but divers of the Hearers, both Miniſters and People, being ſolemnly affected and tenderly touched with the precious Truths therein contained.——May God, of his infinite Mercy, keep theſe Things in the Imagination of the Thoughts of our Hearts, and enable us to act accordingly:*

May we, especially who are of the Sacred Order, obtain Mercy to be faithful, as well as prudent and humble unto Death.

There is nothing of greater Consequence to the Weal of the Churches, than taking due Care respecting the Admission of Candidates into the Ministry. If we are lax in this, and easily introduce Persons who have no positive Evidences of vital Godliness; Error will come in as a Flood, and inundate the Churches; experimental Piety gradually languish, and at last totally expire: To prevent which awful Events, may Almighty GOD bless the following Discourse.——We add no more, but remain thy Servants for CHRIST's Sake.

Philadelphia, Nov.
17. 1755.

GILBERT TENNENT,
RICHARD TREAT.

The

The FAITHFUL MINISTER Encouraged:

A

SERMON, &c.

2 CORINTH. iv. 1. *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not.*

THE Diſpenſation of the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt, *Men, Brethren* and *Fathers*, in ſeveral important reſpects, far excels in Glory the *Moſaic* Diſpenſation. This the Apoſtle had obſerved and clearly proved in the preceding Chapter, and from thence draws the juſt Concluſion in our Text, *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not.*

Here we may obſerve ſeveral Things.

1. We have the Goſpel Miniſtry refer'd to, call'd, *This Miniſtry.*

2. Here are ſome engag'd in this Work: WE HAVE *this Miniſtry.* They are put in Truſt with the Goſpel (*a*).

3. This is to be acknowledged as a Mercy from God: *As we have* RECEIVED MERCY, Some Expoſitors chuſe to join this Sentence with the laſt Clauſe, thus; as *we have received Mercy, we faint not.*

Theſe

a 1 *Theſ.* ii. 4.

Theſe underſtood the Mercy here intended, to be, that of Miniſters being kept from fainting under their Trials.

Others join the two firſt Sentences in our Text together thus, *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy.* They conceive the Mercy here ſpoken of is that of being call'd and employ'd in the ſacred Work. *Beza*'s Jndgment in particular is mentioned in the Continuation of *Poole*'s Annotations, in theſe Words; "The Tradu-
"cers of this great Apoſtle took Advantage from his great
"Trials and Afflictions, by reaſon of them, to conclude
"him no ſuch Man, as he was by ſome repreſented; and
"the Apoſtle upon that takes Advantage to magnify his Office.
"God *(ſaith he)* having intruſted us with ſo *glorious* a Mini-
"ſtration, as I have proved that of the *Goſpel* to be, according
"to the Meaſure and Proportion of Gifts and Graces,
"which God hath beſtowed upon us, or by reaſon of
"that infinite Grace and Mercy, which God hath
"ſhewed us, in calling us to ſo *honorable* a Station and Of-
"fice, though we meet with many Adverſaries, many Af-
"flictions, many Difficulties, yet we bear up, and ſink not
"under them, nor faint in our Spirits becauſe of them."

Thus far he. In this Senſe I propoſe to conſider the Words of our Text.

4. We may obſerve, that great Difficulties muſt be expected in the Work of the Goſpel Miniſtry, or there would be no Danger of *Fainting*.

Again, that we ought not to faint under theſe Difficulties and Trials, but ſhould be able to ſay, through Grace, with the Apoſtle, *we faint not.*

And further, that an excellent Argument againſt *Fainting* in this Work, may be drawn from the Goſpel Miniſtry itſelf, and the ſeveral Motives, that relate to it. *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, we faint not.*

Laſtly,

Laſtly, That faithful Miniſters are kept from *Fainting*, by theſe precious Truths and Motives ſet home with divine Power on their Souls; hence they can ſay with the Apoſtle, *We faint not*; otherwiſe we ſhould ſurely *faint*.

I might comprize theſe important Obſervations in a general One, and lay it down as the Foundation of the preſent Diſcourſe; but as that would open too large a Field for this Opportunity, I ſhall *confine* myſelf to the Conſideration and Improvement of theſe two Things, *viz.* The *Mercy* of being call'd to the Work of the Goſpel Miniſtry, and ſome of the *Reaſons* and *Arguments* which are adapted to guard againſt extreme Diſcouragements, and to excite to active and perſevering Diligence and Faithfulneſs in the Work.

And here I would humbly and earneſtly intreat my reverend *Fathers* and *Brethren* (with others of *God's People* preſent) to lift up your Hearts with Faith and Fervency to the God of all Grace and Fulneſs in Jeſus Chriſt, that I may be enabled ſo to *ſpeak* on theſe Heads, and you ſo to hear, as that our Souls may be much quickened and animated in our Work, in order to the ſaving Good of many Souls, and the Advancement of the Divine Glory in the World.

I am, according to the Method propos'd,

1. To conſider it as a *Mercy* to faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, that they have *this Miniſtry*, that they are call'd to this Work. *We have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy*, ſaith our Text. God in his Mercy is ſet forth by an excellent Divine, as God willing to ſuccour ſinful Men in their Miſery. And how is this remarkably manifeſted to, and experienced by ſuch of the ſinful miſerable Sons of Men, as are prepared for, and improved in the miniſterial Work. Thus the Apoſtle *Paul*, with reſpect to the glorious Goſpel of the bleſſed God, which was committed to his Truſt, ſays, *I thank Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the Miniſtry* (*b*).

b 1 Tim. i. 11, 12. Indeed,

Indeed, when Men ruſh into the Miniſtry, without the Qualifications which the Word of God requires; they act a moſt fooliſh Part, and a Part moſt dangerous and pernicious, both to themſelves and others: But when they are endow'd with thoſe Qualifications, and withal ſet apart to the ſacred Work by Faſting and Prayer, and the laying on of the Hands of the Preſbytery *(c)* they may well be drawn out in Thankfulneſs to God and Chriſt, on the Account, and ſay, This is a *Mercy*, a *great Mercy*, confer'd on us *unworthy, vile and ſinful* Duſt, *that unto us is committed the Miniſtry of Reconciliation (d)*.

This the Ambaſſadors of Chriſt juſtly eſteem a *Mercy*, as it reſpects *themſelves*, as it reſpects *others*, and as they may thus in an *eminent* Degree promote the *Divine Glory* in the World.

1. As it reſpects *themſelves*.

What a Mercy is it to be call'd to a Work, which is calculated to promote their Increaſe of *Grace* as well as *Gifts*? And what a *Comfort* muſt it be to the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel, to conſider, that their *general* and *particular* Callings do happily coincide and ſubſerve each other? Their general Calling, the Care of *their own* Souls, their particular Calling, the Care of *others* Souls. The more cloſely they walk with God themſelves, ſo much the more faithful and engag'd they are in their Work, and the more likely to be ſucceſsful; and on the other Hand, the more faithful they are in their Work, through Grace, ſo much the more *they grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt (e)*. So much the more *their Souls proſper and are in Health (f)* and ordinarily the more they enjoy the *Conſolations* of the Divine Spirit, *which are not ſmall*, the more their Light ſhines before others, and they adorn their Pro-

c Acts xiv. 23. 1 *Tim.* iv. 14. *d* 2 *Cor.* v. 18, 19.
e 2 *Pet.* iii. 18. *f Epiſt. of John v.* 2.

Profeſſion, and the more they are attemper'd to the heavenly State, and prepared for eternal Glory.

'Tis true they are from ſeveral Quarters beſet at times with Temptations, perhaps more ſo than others; as Officers in an Army are more aim'd and pointed at by the Enemy than private Soldiers; but theſe Temptations their great Lord and Leader wiſely permits, to *prove* them, and bring them to know more of themſelves, that they may take root downwards, in order to bear Fruit upwards; he ſhews them thus their own Inſufficiency, and leads them to depend upon his All-ſufficiency in the New Covenant, and hereupon they find him *a very preſent Help in Trouble (g)*: They are thus humbled and purified, and made more meet for their Maſter's Service, more watchful and circumſpect, more patient and reſign'd under Trials and Sufferings, and more diligent in their Work, and probably more ſucceſsful too; and this is a *great Mercy*,

Again, the Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, are to *give themſelves to reading, to Meditation and Prayer*; and how may they thus, through the divine Bleſſing, grow apace, both in doctrinal and experimental Knowledge, yea, I may add, in every Chriſtian Grace and Virtue? And is not this a *great Mercy?*

It is a further Comfort and a Mercy too, that we, who have *this Miniſtry*, may be preaching to ourſelves, as well as praying over the Sermons we prepare for, and preach to others; yea, we may ſee more clearly the beautiful Harmony and Connection of divine Truths, as well as feel more of the happy Effects of them; while we are attending on the Expoſition of ſacred Scripture, and when catechiſing our People, or making Preparations therefor.

In the Adminiſtration of divine Ordinances, eſpecially the Sacraments of the New Teſtament, how may we reap much Profit and Pleaſure ourſelves, through Grace, ſee more of

g *Pſal* xlvi. 1.

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g *Pſal* xlvi. 1.

the Faithfulneſs, Grace, Holineſs, and other Perfections of our God and Saviour; and grow more holy, comfortable and fruitful.

In our *Paſtoral Viſits* we may often, through Divine Aſſiſtance, caution and comfort, direct and edify others and ourſelves at the ſame Time,

And in the Diſcipline of God's Houſe, while we endeavour to reclaim others, we may be not a little guarded and benefited ourſelves: We may be led to ſee much of the Aggravations and Evil of Sin, the Snares that lie thick around, the conſtant Neceſſity of Watchfulneſs and Prayer, and of living by Faith on God in Chriſt; that we may as *Chriſtians*, and as *Miniſters*, bring forth much Fruit.

In a Word, *every* Part of the miniſterial Work is in ſome reſpect or other adapted to promote our increaſing Conformity to the Perfections and Will of God in our Hearts and Lives: Is it not then a *Mercy*, a *great Mercy*, that we have been call'd to this Work? *We have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy.*

Though it is a difficult, yet it is alſo a delightful and uſeful, as well as honourable Work; and it is a *Mercy*, not only with reſpect to *us*, but alſo,

2. With reſpect to *others*.

It is truly adapted, both in the public and private Parts of it, as a Means to promote the beſt, the everlaſting Intereſts of all our Hearers; but Men are hardened by Sin and Unbelief, and blinded by Satan and the World: *They hate the Light, and will not come to the Light, leſt their Deeds ſhould be reproved (h).* And nothing ſhort of the Almighty Energy of the Holy Ghoſt, will make the Word effectual to ſaving Purpoſes; well may the *Regenerate* then be ſaid to be *born of the Spirit (i). By Grace we are ſaved, through Faith,* and

h John iii. 20. *i John* iii. 5, 8.

and that not of ourſelves, it is the Gift of God: Not of Works, leſt any Man ſhould boaſt (k). But as the Spirit makes Uſe of the Word, ſo we are ſaid to be *born again by the Word of God, and begotten through the Goſpel (l).* And Faith is ſaid to *come by Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God; for how ſhall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how ſhall they hear without a Preacher? and how ſhall they preach, except they be ſent (m)?* The Apoſtle was not *aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt, for,* ſays he, *it is the Power of God unto Salvation to every one that believeth*‡; *and to theſe we are the Savour of Life unto Life,* through rich Grace, although to others *the Savour of Death unto Death (n).*

We are call'd in the miniſterial Work, as Inſtruments to *inſtruct* the Ignorant, to *convince* the Erroneous, to *reclaim* the Vicious, to *awaken* the Secure, to *rouze* the Slothful, to *ſap* the Foundation of Hypocrites, and to *ſhew* the Self-righteous their extream and deſtructive Folly; and though this is truly hard Work, yet it muſt be done in God's Strength, and when done and bleſt, very uſeful.

It is further uſeful and pleaſant withal, to *direct* enquiring Souls to Chriſt, to *win* them over to him, through his all-powerful Grace, that they may receive him in his moſt glorious Perſon and precious Benefits, as he is offer'd in the Goſpel: And what a *Mercy* is this both to us and them.

Again, we are call'd as Inſtruments, to *build up* the Saints in Faith, and Holineſs, and Comfort. We are to *comfort* them in their Trials from within and without, *with the*

 ſame

‡ Very juſt then is the Concluſion drawn by the pious and ingenious *Watts*,

Should all the Forms that Men deviſe,
Aſſault my Faith with treach'rous Art,
I'd call them Vanity and Lies,
And bind the Goſpel to my Heart.

k Eph. ii. 8, 9. *l* 1 *Pet.* i. 23. 1 *Cor.* iv. 15. *m Rom.* x. 17, 14, 15. *n Rom.* i. 16. 2 *Cor.* ii. 16.

ſame Conſolations, wherewith we ourſelves are comforted of God. And is it not a Favour to be made thus uſeful to God's People? We were call'd in our Work *to carry the Lambs in our Boſom, and gently to lead thoſe that are with Young*, after the Example and under the Influence of the great, the chief Shepherd *(p)*. We are to give *Milk to Babes*, as well as *ſtrong Meat* to the more grown *(q)* to *ſtrengthen* the Weak, to *fix* the Wavering, to *guide* the Doubting, to *quicken* the Backward, to *ſuccour* the Tempted, to *direct* Believers to *be ſtrong*, not in the Grace they have received, but *in the Grace which is in Chriſt Jeſus*; and to be engaged, through Grace, in improving the Comforts they enjoy, as Encouragements and Means to an higher End, even Holineſs and the Divine Glory. Thus our Work, the *miniſterial* Work is adapted, and thus it is bleſt to the Benefit of many Souls: We may juſtly ſay then, *We have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy*: Eſpecially ſince,

3. We may, with Divine Aſſiſtance, by and in this Work, in an *eminent* Degree promote the *Divine Glory* in the World.

How is the Glory of God and Chriſt and true *Religion* manifeſted by our Increaſe in Gifts and Grace, in Holineſs and Uſefulneſs Thence it appears in ſome Meaſure what a Maſter we ſerve, what a God we worſhip, what a Saviour we preach and offer, what a *Religion* we profeſs and recommend.

My Brethren, certainly God is the greateſt and beſt of Beings; ſurely then, the ſetting him forth to be, or manifeſting him as ſuch, is the greateſt and higheſt End that can be: This is his Glory, this End is worthy of a God, and this is the higheſt End of all his Friends, Children and Servants: This End, the Work of the Miniſtry, is wonderfully ſuited and bleſt to promote: What a *Mercy* is it then to any of us *vile*, *apoſtate* and *periſhing* Sons of Men, to be brought

p Iſa. xl. 2. *q* 1 *Cor.* iii. 1, 2. home

home to Chriſt, and call'd to this ſacred Work. *We have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy.*

I would here make two *Remarks* on this Head, before we paſs to the next.

1. We may plainly ſee, that we who are in the *Miniſtry*, have no reaſon to *think highly* of ourſelves, no reaſon to be *proud* and *Vain-glorious*. We ſhould indeed take Care to *magnify our Office*, and in no Inſtances or reſpects to underact the ſacred Character; but at the ſame Time, the Language of each of our Souls, muſt be that of *Job*, *Behold I am vile (r)*‡. The Temper of our Minds, and the Tenor of our Lives, ſhould be humble and holy. How ſhould we be *clothed with Humility*, as it were from Head to Foot, who are Miniſters of the *meek and lowly* Jeſus: How ſhould we watch and pray againſt Pride, hate and ſhun this vile *Monſter* and this dangerous Snare, this awful *Condemnation of the Devil*. Let us often think, for our Humiliation, *What have we*, that is in any Meaſure good and valuable, *that we have not received?* And again, what have we that we have not miſimproved? And as to the Goſpel Miniſtry, it will be a ſpecial Guard againſt Pride, to realize, through Grace, how we came by it, namely, by *meer undeſerved Mercy*, and ſhall we be proud of Mercy? *We have this Miniſtry only as we have received Mercy*. Where is Boaſting then? It is excluded.

2. Hence

‡ "It is a divine as well as wiſe and juſt Remark made by one of the greateſt "*Maſters* of *Thought* in the laſt Age, that Perſons of *Quality* and Character "ought to have two Sorts of Thoughts by which to regulate their Conduct: By "the *one* they are to view themſelves in their State of diſtinguiſhing *Elevation*, which "is not from Nature, but arbitrary *Eſtabliſhment*; by the *other* they are to take a "Proſpect of themſelves in their natural Condition of *Infirmity* and *Equality*, "with the reſt of Mankind." (And I may here add, of Sin and Miſery.) Pemberton's *Election Sermon*, *p.* 1.

r *Job* xl. 4.

2. Hence we may obſerve Ground of peculiar Encouragement in the Work of the Miniſtry amidſt all the Difficulties that attend it. *We have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy*; and is it a Mercy we have it, and ſhall we be diſcouraged with it? Shall we be diſcouraged with Mercy? *Therefore let us not faint.*

With this Thought we come by an eaſy Tranſition, to the 2. *General Head*, under which I am to conſider and ſet before you ſome of the many *Reaſons* and *Arguments* inducing to Faithfulneſs in the Miniſterial Work: And here,

1. The *Command* in God's Word ſhould powerfully and conſtantly engage to be *faithful* and not *faint* in this great Work. This Command we have in theſe Words *(ſ) Go ye and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt: Teaching them to obſerve all Things whatſoever I have commanded you.* And in another Place, *Take heed to yourſelves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made You Overſeers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood.* And again, *I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the Quick and the Dead at his Appearing, and his Kingdom: Preach the Word, be inſtant in Seaſon, and out of Seaſon; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all Long-ſuffering and Doctrine. Watch thou in all Things, endure Afflictions, do the Work of an Evangeliſt, make full Proof of thy Miniſtry.* With many other Paſſages to the ſame Purpoſe. Surely, *my Brethren*, the Mind and Will of the Lord, infinitely glorious in himſelf, and withal our Maker, Preſerver, and Governor, Benefactor and *Redeemer*, thus revealed in his Word, ſhould engage us, through Grace, to chearful, conſtant and faithful Obedience. *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy, let us not faint.*

2. The

ſ Mat. xxviii. 19, 20. *Acts* xx. 28. 2 *Tim.* iv. 1, 2, 5.

2. The *Example of Chriſt* ſhould animate us in the miniſterial Work.

Here we have a perfect Pattern to copy after. The bleſſed Jeſus diſcover'd from Time to Time the moſt ardent Love to God and Man in his more public and private Tranſactions and Miniſtrations, and ſought not his own Glory, but the Glory of him that ſent him; ſo ſhould we, through his Grace.

How zealous and couragious was he, and yet how prudent and diſcreet? How plain and pungent, and yet how compaſſionate, how regardleſs of the Flatteries or Frowns of the World? how meek and lowly of Heart? how faithful in the Diſcharge of perſonal and relative Duties? how holy and pure? how reſigned to his Heavenly Father's Diſpoſal? how frequent and fervent in Prayer, and how laborious in his beloved Work? (t) *I muſt work*, ſays he, *the Works of him that ſent me, while it is Day.* And again, *My Meat is to do the Will of him that ſent me, and to finiſh his Work.*

How willing was he to do and ſuffer what he was call'd to, even to the Death? Oh Sirs! *Let the ſame mind be in us, that was in him: Wherefore, holy Brethren, Partakers of the heavenly Calling, let us conſider the Apoſtle and High Prieſt of our Profeſſion, Chriſt Jeſus; who was faithful to him that appointed him, as alſo* Moſes *was faithful in all his Houſe (u). Let us not then be weary or faint in our minds*, or flag in the more difficult Part, or latter Stages of our road; but may we ſay, and ſpeak it with Truth, *Seeing we have this* Miniſtry, *as we have received* Mercy [*of the Lord*] *we faint not.*

3. The *Example of Chriſt's faithful Servants* in the Miniſtry ſhould animate us in the Work. 'Tis true, *my Brethren*, the beſt of Chriſt's Miniſters are imperfect in the preſent State, and therefore not to be propos'd as perfect Patterns

t *John* xi. 4. *John* iv. 34. u *Heb.* iii. 1, 2.

terns for Imitation; but we are to be *Followers of them, even as* they *are of Chriſt (w)*; ſo far as they are ſo, and no farther. How encouraging is it to obſerve them, while attended with a Body of Sin and Death, and aſſaulted by Temptations from the World and the Devil, as we are; yet, through Grace, approving themſelves ſincere, and in a good Degree engag'd in their Work.

What a lovely Example is ſet before us in our Text, and the following Verſe; *Therefore ſeeing we have this* Miniſtry, *as we have received* Mercy, *we faint not: But have renounced the hidden Things of Diſhoneſty, not walking in Craftineſs, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifeſtation of the Truth, commending ourſelves to every man's Conſcience in the Sight of God.* And again, in the ſame Epiſtle, *We do all Things, dearly Beloved, for your Edifying (x). Our Exhortation,* ſaith this great Apoſtle of the *Gentiles,* in another Epiſtle *(y) was not of Deceit, nor of Uncleanneſs, nor in Guile, but as we were allowed of God to be put in Truſt with the Goſpel, even ſo we ſpeak, not as pleaſing Men, but God, which trieth our Hearts. For neither at any Time uſed we flattering Words, as ye know, nor a Cloke of Covetouſneſs; God is Witneſs. Nor of men ſought we Glory, neither of you, nor yet of others: Being affectionately deſirous of You, we were willing to have imparted unto You, not the Goſpel of God only, but alſo our own Souls, becauſe Ye were dear unto us. Ye are Witneſſes, and God alſo, how holily, and juſtly, and unblameably we behaved ourſelves among You that believe:* And elſewhere *(z). I take You to record this Day, that I am pure from the Blood of all men; for I have not ſhunned to declare unto You, the whole Counſel of God. Ye know how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto You, but have ſhewed You, and have taught You publickly*

w 1 *Cor.* xi. 1. *x* 2 *Cor.* xii. 19. *y* 1 *Theſ.* ii. 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10. *z Acts* xx. 26, 27, 18, 20, 31, 24.

lickly and from Houſe to Houſe. Remember that by the Space of Three Years, I ceaſed not to warn every one Night and Day with Tears. Again ſpeaking of *Bonds and Afflictions abiding him*, he ſays, *But none of theſe Things move me, neither count I my Life dear unto myſelf, ſo that I might finiſh my Courſe with Joy, and the* Miniſtry *which I have received of the Lord Jeſus, to teſtify the Goſpel of the Grace of God.*

Oh! how willing have the faithful Servants of the dear *Redeemer* been in the primitive Times, and ſince, *to keep under their Bodies* (*a*) to live near to God, *to ſpend and be ſpent* in the Service of Chriſt and of Souls; and even when call'd to it, to ſeal the Truth with their Blood.

We have great reaſon, my *Brethren*, to bleſs God, that a conſiderable Number of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, in *Great-Britain and America* have, in our Day, been much engag'd in the Cauſe of God; among theſe may be reckon'd godly Mr. *Whiteſield*, whoſe *indefatigable* and *ſucceſsful* Labours, for almoſt *twenty* Years together, ſhould be improv'd for the Encouragement and Quickening of all truly engag'd in the ſacred Work; whoſe Name is juſtly very dear to us: May God Almighty always keep him, with other his Servants, humble; bleſs them, and make them Bleſſings, and that more and more abundantly, *to the Praiſe of his Glory in Chriſt Jeſus.*

While we are muſing on theſe Things, let the *Fire* of Divine Love and Zeal be enkindled in our Breaſts, and burn vigorouſly, that we may be ſweetly conſtrained to ſay, *Therefore ſeeing we have this* Miniſtry, *as we have received* Mercy, *we faint not, and, through Grace, we will not faint.*

a 1 *Cor.* ix. 27.

4. The *Example* of the *holy Angels*, ſhould quicken us in our Work. They are Meſſengers of the Lord, as their Name imports; in ſeveral reſpects their Work and ours reſemble each other; no Wonder then, that Miniſters of the Goſpel are called *Angels* (*b*). It may further be intended by this Appellation, that we ſhould be excited, as far as the Imperfections of the preſent State admit, to an Imitation of the holy Angels, who are ſaid (*c*) *always to behold the Face of our Father which is in Heaven*, and fly with winged Zeal to execute his Commands, *encamp round about* thoſe *that fear the Lord*, for their Comfort and Deliverance, and rejoice at the Converſion of Sinners, *&c.*

Are the Angels heavenly-minded, zealous and faithful in their Work, let us be ſo in ours, through Grace; *Therefore, ſeeing we have this* Miniſtry, *as we have received* Mercy, *let us not faint.*

5. The Induſtry and Malice, Subtilty and Succeſs of the Devil in his Attempts to ruin Mens Souls, ſhould engage us the more in faithful Endeavours, that they may be reſcued and ſaved; or in other Words, ſhould quicken us to Diligence in our Work.

We are not ignorant of Satan's Devices (*d*): Let us then be concerned, that we, and others, eſpecially thoſe under our immediate Care, may be guarded againſt them.

The Drift of the Spirit of God, in order to the recovery of poor captive Souls out of the Snare of the Devil, is to counter-act, and to guard againſt his Devices (*e*). The Miniſters of the Goſpel, as *Workers together with God* (*f*) are

b Rev. i. 20. *c Mat.* xviii. 10. *Dan.* ix. 9, 21. *Pſ.* c. iii. 20, 21. *Pſal.* xxxiv. 7. *Luke* xv. 10. *d* 2 *Cor.* ii. 11. *e* 2 *Cor.* iv. 3, 4. *comp. with Acts* xxvi. 17, 18. *f* 2 *Cor.* vi. 1.

are engag'd as Inſtruments to guard againſt the ſame Devices, and are eſpecially concern'd that Souls may *not receive* the Goſpel of the *Grace of God in vain* (*g*). Our *Adverſary the Devil*, as the Apoſtle *Peter* obſerves, *as a roaring Lion, walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour.*

Is the Devil, the Enemy of all Good, an Adverſary to Souls? Shall not we Miniſters of the Goſpel be *Friends* to them?

Is he, with his Inſtruments, ſet with Boldneſs, like Lions, againſt Souls? Sha'n't *we* be couragious as Lions in going through all Difficulties to promote their ſaving Good? Does he roar with Malice and Wrath againſt Souls? Sha'n't *we* cry with Fervency to God for them, and cry aloud to them with Bowels of Pity and Compaſſion, and *beſeech them to be reconciled to God?* Does *the Devil* walk about, ſeeking whom he may devour, and that with awful Succeſs, and ſhall *we* ſtick at any Pains, Night or Day, in public or private, at home or abroad, in the Buſineſs of our Calling as Miniſters, which is to ſeek whom we may as Inſtruments ſave from the Jaws of this devouring Lion, and guide to the regions of Glory? If we, *Brethren*, ſhould faint, the Devil will not; *Therefore ſeeing we have this* Miniſtry, *as we have received* Mercy, *let us not faint.*

6. *The Worth of Souls* ſhould engage Miniſters of the Goſpel to Faithfulneſs in their Work. The great Worth of Souls makes the Devil ſo eager to deſtroy them.

This makes the holy Angels engag'd for their Good; this cauſes *Joy in Heaven on* their *Converſion.* Here are two Worlds at Strife; about what? about earthly Crowns and Scepters? no! theſe are Trifles. About what then? The

g 2 *Cor.* vi. 1. 1 *Pet.* v. 8.

Souls of Men, whoſe Worth is exceeding great. What are *all the Kingdoms of the World, and Glory of them*, in Compariſon with the Soul? If you put theſe in one Scale, and the Soul in the other, they come up light as Vanity itſelf.

Our Bleſſed Saviour has determined this Point, both by his Words and Practice; by his Practice, when he pour'd Contempt on the World; but laid down his precious Life, and ſhed his Heart's Blood, to redeem and ſave periſhing Souls:—By his Words, which are theſe (*h*) *What is a Man profited, if he ſhall gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul? Or what ſhall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?*

Oh! Shall we not be engaged then, agreeable to the Deſign of our Commiſſion, and from a Senſe of the Worth of Souls, in the moſt painful and faithful Endeavours, through divine aſſiſting Grace, *to open Mens Eyes, and to turn them from Darkneſs to Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God, that they may receive Forgiveneſs of Sins, and Inheritance among them that are ſanctified by Faith which is in Chriſt. Therefore, beloved Brethren, ſeeing we have this* Miniſtry, *as we have received* Mercy. *let us not faint.*

7. *Mens Care and Pains about Things of leſs Worth*, ſhould engage and animate us in our Work†. *How will Men riſe up early, and ſit up late (i)* and *eat the Bread of Sorrow* and Care, in order to obtain earthly Enjoyments, which periſh in the

† A Soul immortal, ſpending all her Fires,
Waſting her Strength in ſtrenuous Idleneſs,
Thrown into Tumult raptur'd, or alarm'd,
At ought this Scene can threaten, or indulge,
Reſembles *Ocean* into Tempeſt wrought,
To waft a Feather, or to drown a Fly. *Night Thoughts.*

h Mutthew xvi. 26. *i Pſalm* cxxvii. 2.

the Uſing. What Pains will Men take, yea, what Hazards will they run, in purſuit of "glittering Gems, gaudy Honors, and ſhining Duſt," which after all are Vanity? How will Men be at vaſt Expence and Labour, ſome Way or other, to pleaſe and pamper their Bodies, which yet muſt ſoon moulder into their kindred Duſt; and ſhall not we be as much, nay more concern'd about their precious Souls, that muſt ſurely live forever, either in a State of Happineſs, or Miſery†? *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy, let us never faint.*

Again, *the Sufficiency of Divine Grace* held forth to us in the *precious Promiſes* of God's Word, ſhould comfort and animate us in our Work. Many and great are our Trials and Difficulties from without and within, and they often meet and join their Forces; we may well ſay then, *Who is ſufficient for theſe Things* (*k*)? And we ſhould ſurely ſink, had we not a more than human Prop, at ſuch a Time, a divine Support; ſuch as *Paul* had given him, when afflicted with *a Thorn in the Fleſh, the Meſſenger of Satan to buffet* him: When in this Diſtreſs, he *beſought the Lord thrice*, he had this Anſwer (*l*) *My Grace is ſufficient for thee, for my Strength is made perfect in Weakneſs.* How is it with *Paul* now? he is kept from fainting, he is refreſh'd, he even rejoices and triumphs, and gives God the Glory; *Moſt gladly therefore*, ſays he, *will I rather glory in my Infirmities, that the Power of Chriſt may reſt upon me.* Again he tells us elſewhere,

† Beware what Earth calls Happineſs; beware
All Joys, but Joys that never can expire.
Who builds on leſs than an *immortal* Baſe,
Fond as he ſeems, condemns his Joys to Death. *Night Thoughts.*

k 2 *Cor.* ii. 16. *l* 2 *Cor.* xii. 9.

where (*m*) *He can do all Things, through Chriſt, which ſtrengtheneth him*; ſo may we too, living by Faith on the ſame *Mediator of the New Covenant*, which is *well ordered in all Things, and ſure*: Let us then *truſt in the Lord for ever; in the Lord Jehovah is everlaſting Strength* (*n*). But what need I enlarge? Have we not the expreſs Promiſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to his faithful Miniſters (*o*) *Lo, I am with you always, even unto the End of the World. Therefore, ſeeing we have this Miniſtry*, and theſe Supports and Encouragements, *as we have received Mercy, we faint not.*

Furthermore, *ſurrounding Dangers* join'd to the laſt Conſideration, ſhould engage us to Faithfulneſs in our Work. Indeed Dangers in themſelves tend to damp and diſcourage, but when they meet with a Mind prepar'd for them, they ſerve to quicken and animate. This is remarkable in Perſons of a martial Spirit; I may inſtance in *Alexander the Great*, who in a Time of great and uncommon Peril, breaks out into this Expreſſion, *Hoc eſt periculum, par animo Alexandri*: "This is a Danger fit for the Spirit of an *Alexander* "to encounter."

As the Devil would fain ruin Souls, ſo he would fain keep Miniſters of the Word from being faithful; and often *ſtands at their Right-hand to reſiſt them* (*p*). The remains of Corruption within us, give great Strength to his Temptations; and the Difficulty and Danger is increas'd by the World; I mean by the Fears and the Hopes of the preſent State. Oh! what Need have we to live near to God, that we may be well ſupplied and fortified againſt theſe Aſſaults; and likewiſe ſtrength'ned and engaged through Grace, to *pluck*

m Phil. iv. 13. *n Iſa.* xxvi. 4. *o Mat.* xxviii. 20.
p Zech. iii. 1.

pluck Souls as *Brands out of the Burning*, and to uſe ſkilfully and faithfully thoſe *Weapons* of Doctrine and Diſcipline, *which are not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of ſtrong Holds (q)* the ſtrong Holds of Sin, eſpecially Licentiouſneſs and Self-righteouſneſs, and of Satan and the World, who are join'd in a moſt diſmal and dangerous Confederacy.

Again, the *Dangers* that at preſent *ſurround our Land and Nation*, ſhould deeply affect us, and engage us in encreaſing Zeal, Labours and Faithfulneſs.

We are indeed bleſt with very great Privileges both *civil and ſacred*, under the Smiles of *indulgent Heaven*, and the mild and juſt Adminiſtration of the *beſt of Kings*, who may well be ſtiled a Father of his People; but the haughty, perfidious and cruel *French*, with their Confederates, are bent upon rending theſe Privileges if poſſible from us; upon deſtroying our *Lives*, or, which ought to be much dearer to us, *our Liberty and our Religion.*

An holy and righteous God, tho' he has favour'd us with ſome *remarkable* Inſtances of undeſerved Goodneſs and Succeſs in the *Eaſt* and *North*; for which we ought ſurely to return him our moſt grateful Acknowledgments in Heart, Lip and Life; yet becauſe of the many and grievous Sins of this Land and Nation has ſuffer'd our Enemies to gain ſome Advantages againſt us, eſpecially in our late *awful* Defeat to the *Weſtward.*

Thus we ſee in ſome Meaſure what we are when left to ourſelves; but *Wo* will be indeed to us *if God depart from us* (*r*) and a Deluge of *Popery*, *Tyranny* and *Slavery* overwhelm us.

Our Danger is evidently *much* encreaſed by the aforeſaid *terrible* Frown of Divine Providence; but what makes our Caſe

q 2 *Cor.* x. 4. r *Hoſ.* ix. 12.

Caſe moſt of all *dark and diſmal* is this, *viz.* Our continuing in general *ſtupid and unreform'd, unbelieving and impenitent* under this late *awful* Judgment, added to the *Drought*, and to other Judgments ſent before, as well as under the many and great *Mercies* and *Privileges* we have long enjoy'd, and long *abus'd* and *miſimprov'd*, which the Lord in his Providence therefore loudly threatens to take from us, to withdraw his gracious Influence and Protection at once, and what would then be left behind, but *Darkneſs and Perplexity, Confuſion and Horror, Deſolation and Miſery?*

In this Day of Darkneſs and Gloominеſs, *my Brethren*, we ſhould be deeply humbled and penitent ourſelves, and faithfully promote others being ſo. In this Day of *imminent* Danger, let us not fail to ſound the *Alarm* with Faithfulneſs and Compaſſion, with Plainneſs and Pungency. Let us *cry aloud, and not ſpare (ſ)* let us *ſhew* to our People, and the People of this Land and Nation, *their Tranſgreſſions and* their *Sins*, Sins againſt God's Law and againſt his Grace, *&c.* and let us, through Grace, be more faithful than ever in our Labours, both in public and private for the good of dear precious Souls: And how ſhould we *Brethren* withal, as *Daniel* ſucceſsfully did *(t) ſet our Face to the Lord God*, to ſeek by Prayer and *Supplication, with Faſting* and Humiliation, and *confeſſing our Sin, and the* Sin of our People.

Thus let us *ſtand in the Gap*, as well as *on the Watch Tower: For Zion's Sake we will not hold our Peace, and for Jeruſalem's Sake we will not reſt, until the Righteouſneſs thereof go forth as Brightneſs, and the Salvation thereof as a Lamp that burneth (u). Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not*, and, thro' Grace, we will not faint.

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ſ Iſa. lviii. 1. *t Dan.* ix. 3, 20. *u Iſa.* lxii. 1.

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APPLICATION.

1. Hence we learn, what young Men ſhould have a true and juſt Senſe of, who are about to enter upon the Work of the Goſpel Miniſtry; even of theſe important Arguments and Motives mentioned, and ſuch like.

Surely they ought to *ſit down and count the Coſt* in the firſt Place:—It would be extream Folly to do otherwiſe, and if they do that well, they would by no Means venture on the Work, without a real and ſpiritual Senſe of the Motives engaging to Faithfulneſs therein; for without that, they might juſtly expect to faint and fail under the Difficulties of the Work, which are ſuch, as would be too hard for a *Gabriel*, unaſſiſted to grapple with. What Preſumption, what Madneſs is it then, for any one to undertake this Work in his own Strength, which is *Weakneſs itſelf*, and will be as *nothing*, when ſet againſt the united Temptations of the *World*, the *Fleſh* and the *Devil*? How is the poor Soul made an eaſy Prey, being without God, and without his Grace and Strength ſecured? and what is like to become then of the miſerable Souls he undertakes the Care of?

How awful is it for a Perſon to promiſe before *God*, *Angels and Men*, to be faithful in a Work, which is properly ſpiritual; and which at the ſame Time he, being *unconverted*, hates, becauſe it is *ſpiritual*, from the Bottom of his Heart; *for the carnal Mind is Enmity againſt God* (*w*) ‡, †.

w Rom. viii. 7.

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Is not he more likely to make the Hearts of God's People ſad, than to feed Chriſt's *Sheep* and *Lambs*, while he is void of any true Love to Chriſt (*x*) ? Is not he more likely to direct poor Souls that are enquiring the Way to Glory into ſome *Soul-ruining* By-path, eſpecially the Path he is in himſelf, than to point them to the right road, which he is experimentally an utter Stranger to ?

Oh ! that young Men would be cautious upon this Head, leſt they incur the Guilt of Blood to an *amazing* Degree, and pave the Way to a moſt *aggravated* Condemnation*.

And how careful ſhould the Miniſters of the Goſpel be, with reſpect to the Introduction of others into the ſacred Work‖ :

x John xxi. 15, 16, 17. Tho'

Miniſter, that is not a *true and real Chriſtian* ; and ſuch none can be without real Regeneration, and true Sanctification wrought in him *by the Renewings of the Holy Ghoſt* ; which therefore every one that deſires to enter into the Holy Office of the Goſpel Miniſtry, or does officiate therein, ought moſt ſeriouſly to enquire into his Experience of ; and not forget, that it is required of a Miniſter of Chriſt, that he be *blameleſs, ſober, juſt, holy, temperate, and that he exerciſe himſelf unto Godlineſs*. Holineſs then (even that Holineſs *without which no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*) belongs to the Scripture Character of a Steward of God ; and this all unſanctified, unholy Miniſters ought to think of with Trembling. In a Word, it appears from the Work, Deſign, Ends, and Uſe of the Goſpel Miniſtry, and Scripture Qualifications required of him who officiates therein, that he muſt be a Man of ſincere Piety, and true Godlineſs.

Pierſon's Sermon on Mr. Dickinſon's Death.

† And it ſeems to me theſe would act very unadviſedly, that ſhould enter on that great and ſacred Work (of the Miniſtry) before they had comfortable Satisfaction concerning themſelves, that they have had a ſaving Work of God on their Souls. Edwards's *Thoughts concerning the Revival of Religion.*

* We have all of us perſonal Guilt enough upon us, let us not add other Mens Guilt to our Account : To be guilty of the Blood of the meaneſt Man upon Earth, is a Sin, which will cry in your Conſciences ; but to be guilty of the Blood of Souls, Lord ! who can bear it ? Flavel's *Treatiſe of the Soul of Man.*

‖ *In the Light of this Truth, we may alſo read our Duty, how we ought to govern ourſelves in the Ordination of Men to the miniſterial Office.* This Office is to be committed unto faithful and able Men, 2 Tim. ii. 2. Not to Novices, 1 Tim. iii. 6. I know the Neceſſities of the Church are great ; but no more Haſte (I beſeech you) to ſupply their Wants than good Speed. *Satis celeriter fieri, quickquid commode geritur :* That's ſoon enough, that's well enough. 'Tis a leſs Hazard, to

put

Though they don't know the Heart; yet to inſiſt upon ſufficient Grounds of Satisfaction, not only that they who offer themſelves, are *gifted*, *learned*, *orthodox*, and the like, but alſo that they are *ſavingly* acquainted with Chriſt, and truly engag'd to promote his Glory, and the Salvation of immortal Souls.

Is it not expreſly requir'd, that the Scripture-Biſhop, or Miniſter of the Goſpel, be *holy (y)*? Surely then ſcriptural and ſatisfying Evidences of Holineſs and divine Grace, ſhould be waited for in this Caſe; eſpecially ſince *Timothy* is plainly directed, and we thereby, *To commit theſe Things to faithful Men, who ſhall be able to teach others alſo (z)*.

I ſhall conclude this Head with the mention of what I have ſeen in a Letter indited by the excellent Mr. *David Brainerd* when on his Death-Bed, and in the near Views of Eternity, he there ſignifies, that it appeared *exceeding clear* to his Mind, as well as lay with *great Weight* upon it, that there ought to be *great Satisfaction* of the *true Piety* of thoſe we introduce into the ſacred Work; for, ſays he, "If godly Miniſters are left to be *lax* upon this Head, the Number of *ungodly* ones will the faſter increaſe, and theſe will more readily *ſtrain* a Point, as to the Principles and Practices of thoſe they admit into the Miniſtry; and thus the Land may gradually be over-run, not only with the unconverted, but even with heterodox, looſe and vicious Miniſters; which *dreadful Evil* may the Lord, of his infinite Mercy in Jeſus Chriſt, make us wiſe and faithful, through his Grace, ſeaſonably to prevent."

y Tit. i. 8. *z* 2 *Tim.* ii. 2.

put an ignorant Ruſtic into an Apothecary's Shop, to compound and prepare Medicines for Men's Bodies, than to truſt a Man deſtitute both of Faithfulneſs and Prudence with the Diſpenſation of Chriſt's Ordinances to Mens Souls.

Flavel's *Serm. on the Character of an Evangelical Paſtor.*

2. We learn that Miniſters of *Jeſus Chriſt* ſhould be *frequently and intenſely* fix'd in *Meditation* on theſe and ſuch like Motives, which are truly weighty, and ſuited to promote Faithfulneſs in their Work; and withal be often *wreſtling* with Jehovah in the Name of Chriſt for a deep and ſteady Senſe of them, that we may thus delight in the ſacred Work, even when Succeſs is denied, and look upon it ſtill a great Favour and Honor to be allow'd and enabled to ſpeak and act for God in Chriſt as his Ambaſſadors; and that we may, if Succeſs be granted, receive it as an *additional* Comfort, and give God the Glory, to whom only it belongs. *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not.*

3. Hence the great Propriety and uſeful Tendency of the Miniſters of the everlaſting Goſpel, eſpecially in their *Preſbyterial* and *Synodical* Conventions, their putting each other, in their Turns, in Mind of thoſe great Truths, which tend to eſtabliſh, comfort and animate them in the great and difficult Work, and through the divine Bleſſing will have that Effect, and keep them from fainting; eſpecially ſince Chriſt is the *great and only* Head and King of his Church, and we all his Miniſters are *Fellow-labourers* (*a*): It cannot then be juſtly deem'd arrogant, when the meaneſt and unworthieſt of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, uſe a plain and pathetic Freedom, as at this Time, with others convened, how much ſoever ſuperior in Age or Learning, Gifts or Grace; yet with *becoming Reſpect.*

This naturally leads me to a Word of

EXHORTATION.

And here I would

1. With all Humility addreſs myſelf to my *Reverend Fathers* and dear *Brethren* in the Goſpel-Miniſtry conven'd,

a Eph. i. 22. *Philem.* 24th Verſe. whom

whom I reverence, eſteem and love, and whom in general I'm perſuaded (and rejoice from my *inmoſt* Soul on the Account) that the God of the Spirits of *all Fleſh* has made upright before him, and, in a good Meaſure, faithful to him, and the Souls of Men, in the great and difficult and yet honourable Work he has call'd them to.

I juſt mention this, which I can ſpeak wth *great Sincerity, and affectionate and dutiful, but juſt Regard*, to prevent any Miſconſtruction of the Freedom of Speech I uſe in this Diſcourſe.

Permit me, *Reverend Sirs*, on this Occaſion to congratulate you, that you are call'd, not only to know, but alſo to *preach the unſearchable Riches of Chriſt*. Well may we ſay, *What are we, O Lord, or what is our Father's Houſe? that thou haſt brought us hitherto; and that to us this Grace ſhould be given*; to us! who *are leſs than the leaſt of all Mercies*; yea, to us! who are *leſs than the leaſt of all Saints*. Oh! then, *have* we *this Miniſtry?* 'tis only becauſe and as we have *received Mercy*. Have we furthermore ſpecial Supports and Conſolations, Aſſiſtances and Succeſſes at Times? Still it is *as we have received Mercy*, and only ſo; let God then have all the Glory.

Let us *give Thanks* with our whole Souls, *at the Remembrance of* the Divine *Holineſs*, Power and Grace, diſplay'd at one Time and another, eſpecially about twelve or fifteen Years ago, in a very glorious and wonderful Work of *Converſion* and *Converſion* of Sinners, as well as *Edification* of God's People; which notwithſtanding ſeveral unhappy and ſad *Extravagances*, or *Extreams*, which attended the ſame, we (as a dear *Brother* in the Miniſtry expreſſes it) ſtill *dare* to call a *Work of God*.

Alas!

Alas! *my Brethren*, that we and others have ſo much abus'd and miſimprov'd this unſpeakable Mercy, and provok'd the Lord in ſuch a Meaſure to depart from us!

And how are we call'd to lament, that *Iniquity awfully abounds* in our Land and Nation; Infidelity, and many falſe and corrupt Principles, multiplied; and groſs Immoralities, Profaneneſs, and Vices of all Sorts, Worldlymindedneſs and Lukewarmneſs in religion, Diviſions in Church and State, ſpiritual Sloth and Barrenneſs, Blindneſs and Hardneſs, Ingratitude and Stupidity, under awful Threatnings and Judgments, Preſumption and Security, Pride, Self-righteouſneſs, Unbelief, and Oppoſition to the late glorious Work of God; and, in a Word, awful Diſregard, and even Contempt of God and his Laws, of Chriſt and his Goſpel, and Perſon, and Grace; of their own Souls and their Families and others beſt and eternal Intereſts: And how are we further called to lament that *the Love of many waxes cold?* What a general Coldneſs and Deadneſs, as to religion, has for ſome Years prevail'd; nor can we deny, that the Miniſtry has been infected herewith; though, bleſſed be God, we have ſome *Revivings in our Bondage*, both as to divine Comforts and Succeſs, and *ſhould not deſpiſe the Day of ſmall Things (b)*.

Under the *Judgments* we feel or fear, let us be humbled, but not diſcouraged.

Come, my beloved *Brethren*, let us ariſe, through Grace, and ſhake ourſelves; let us, for God's Sake, for Chriſt's Sake, and for precious Soul's Sake, ariſe, and ſhake off remains of Sloth and Backwardneſs on the one Hand,

b Zech. iv. 10.

Hand, and ſinking Diſcouragements on the other : Let us, in the Lord's Strength, *quit ourſelves like Men*, yea, like *Men of God*, in this dark, degenerate and difficult Day. Oh! what Honor would this reflect on God and religion !

Let us *walk with God*, as *Enoch* did *(c)* : Let us be valiant, and yet diſcreet, active and diligent ; *ſtedfaſt, and unmovable, fervent in Spirit, and full of the Holy Ghoſt* ; *always abounding in the Work of the Lord* ; *knowing that our Labour is not in vain in the Lord (d)*. If we are faithful, and Souls be not gathered, yet we ſhall be *glorious in the Eyes of the Lord* ;—if they be, then we ſhall ſay e'er long, *Lord, here we are, and the Children thou haſt* graciouſly *given* us ; and ſhall rejoice with them in Glory for ever.

Oh ! my *Fathers*, my *Brethren*, the *Eyes* of Chriſt, who *will judge the Quick and the Dead at his Appearing, and his Kingdom*, his *Eyes*, I ſay, which *are as a Flame of Fire* (*e*) are upon us continually in all Parts of our Work and Conduct, with reference to the final Judgment, and that ſtrict Account we muſt give at his Bar : And if any of us ſhould then meet with the Doom of the *Slothful Servant*, how dreadful ! how intolerable !———The very Thought is big with Horror ! and Words fail !———

But on the other Hand, how *glorious*, inconceivably *glorious*, is the *Reward* we ſhall have, if we are faithful, through Grace : Oh ! how ſhall we exult with *extatic* Joy, when our Lord ſays to us, *Well done good and faithful Servants, enter into the Joy*, the eternal Joy, *of your Lord.*

With this Proſpect, ſhall we not moſt willingly *ſpend and be ſpent* in our Work for Chriſt, and for Souls ? eſpecially conſidering what Chriſt Jeſus our Lord has done and ſuffered

c Gen. v. 22. *d* 1 *Cor.* xv. 58. *e Rev.* i. 14.

ed for us; and how he has groaned and ſweat, bled and died for us on the Croſs, that we might live and reign with him in Glory.

Let us further realize the *infinite Glory, Purity and Excellency of Chriſt, behold him altogether lovely*, and think nothing too much to do or ſuffer for him, but all vaſtly too little. Had we a Thouſand Lives, and he call'd for them. ſhould we not, with the greateſt Freedom and Alacrity, lay them all down, as one ſpeaks faſt, as the ſucceſſive Minutes roll.——But I muſt haſten.——*Chriſt's Dying Love* to his Church, as well as to us, ſhould engage us in our great and difficult, yet honorable, profitable and pleaſant Work.

Again, the *People of God are helping us by their Prayers*, and holding up our Arms, while we are *doing the Lord's Work*, and *fighting the Lord's Battles*; and though evil Men *watch for our halting*, this ſhould but make us watch and pray the more, and work the harder, and ſtand more ſure, not in our own, but the Lord's Strength.

Furthermore, *Faithfulneſs* in our Work, will *expreſs Gratitude* to the bleſſed Jeſus, for calling us to the Knowledge of himſelf, and for putting us into the Miniſtry, both which are *very great Mercies*: *Therefore ſeeing we have this Miniſtry, as we have received Mercy, let us not faint*; eſpecially ſince our Time is ſhort and Death comes haſtening on‖. Alas!

‖ ſhall I ſquander away what is *unutterably important*, while it laſts, and when once departed, is *altogether irrevocable*? O! my Soul, forbear the Folly: Forbear the deſperate Extravagance. Wilt thou chide as a *Loiterer*, the Arrow that *boundeth* from the String: or ſweep away *Diamonds*, as the *Refuſe* of the Houſe?---Throw Time away! Aſtoniſhing, ruinous, irreparable Profuſeneſs! Throw Empires away and be blameleſs. But O! be parſimonious of thy Days: husband thy precious Hours. *Hervey's* Contemplations.

Alas! that ſo much of our Time is run to Waſte, and we have done no more for God: Oh! then, let us ſeize the *flying Moments*, and employ them all for God, and Chriſt, and Souls.

Some of our Number within a few Years paſt are called home from their *Work* to their *Reward*, from light and *momentary Trials*, to a *far more exceeding, and eternal Weight of Glory*.

Oh! that *a double Portion of the Spirit* may fall on us who ſurvive, that we may *redeem* our *Time* in the beſt Manner, and double our Diligence!

Many Opportunities we have to expreſs our Love to Chriſt and Souls in this Life, that we ſhall never have afterwards: Oh! that we may improve them all, through Grace, to the beſt Purpoſe!

Hold out *Faith and Patience*, hold out *Zeal, Activity and Courage*, a little longer, and we ſhall, *Reverend and dear Sirs*, be with our triumphant Brethren above, and perfectly enjoy, glorify and praiſe our God and Saviour for ever and ever.

2. I would ſpeak a Word to thoſe of the Children of God who are not in the Miniſtry. *Brethren! Pray for us!* (*f*). Many Difficulties we meet with in our Work; Oh! pray, that we may not faint or flag; but may find the Grace of our God abundantly ſufficient, that we may be ſucceſsful, if it be the Lord's Will; but, eſpecially, that we may *be faithful to the Death, and then receive a Crown of Life*.

I may ſay to you as I have heard it was ſaid by thoſe who were going to take *Cape-Breton*, when they parted with their Friends upon the Shore, "Do you *pray* for us, and we will *fight* "for you:" Yea, I may ſay farther, Do you *pray* for us,

(*f*) 1 *Theſ.* v. 25.

and we will *work* for you, and *pray* for you too, through Grace, that you may *grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, that you may *live by Faith* on him, continually *bring forth much Fruit*, adorn your Profeſſion, and ripen apace for Glory; and Oh! *Give the Lord no Reſt, till he make Jeruſalem a Praiſe and Joy in the Earth.* And, *dear Brethren*, pray often, and pray earneſtly, for *poor, Chriſtleſs, periſhing* Souls.

I would now,

3. Conclude with an Addreſs to *ſuch.*

No ſmall Part of our Work, *my dear Hearers*, who are yet in the diſmal State of *Unregeneracy* relates to you; and many Difficulties, Services and Fatigues we are willing to go through without fainting, out of Love to, and Concern for your precious Souls, if by any Means we may win you over to the Knowledge and Love of God and Chriſt, and, at leaſt, *ſave ſome.*

Oh! conſent to be happy, and to live for ever, and don't *kill* yourſelves; don't *throw* yourſelves Body and Soul into Hell: This you *will* do, if you continue in *Sin* and *Unbelief.*

We come in God's Name to you, and *pray you in Chriſt's Stead to be reconciled to God*:—We preach the *Terrors* of the Law, as Means ſuited to awaken and convince you of your ſinful, awful State, and abſolute *Need* of a *Saviour*; and we ſet before you the *Invitations* of the Goſpel, and the Grace, Beauties and Glories of *Immanuel*; with Deſires, that you may, by the Almighty Power and Grace of God, be made willing to receive Chriſt Jeſus, juſt as he is offered in the Goſpel, and reſt upon him alone for Salvation: Then, *my Brethren*, you will be inconceivably happy and bleſſed for ever.

But

But Oh! if you continue to neglect and refuse Christ, you must perish. *The faithful and true Witness* has declared plainly with his own Mouth, *He that believeth not, shall be damned (g).* If you will go to Hell, after all, from under the glorious Advantages of the Gospel, how aggravated must your Damnation be *(h)?* Oh! can you bear to lie under the *dreadful* Wrath of the *great* and *terrible* God in the Flames of Hell, without one *Drop* of Water to *cool* your *scorched* Tongues; where the *Worm* of Conscience *never dies, and the Fire is not quenched*; and where you must lie roaring, *wailing and gnashing your Teeth*, for ever and ever.

Oh! then *rest not* in your present Condition; and, tho' you must take all *possible Pains* in religion, *read, hear, pray, meditate*, and, in a Word, *strive* with all Earnestness, yet don't rest upon that, or think that God is *obliged* hereupon to save you; but acknowledge he might most *justly* after all this, cast you into Hell:—Come therefore as a *poor, guilty, empty, vile, sinful, perishing, ill-deserving, and Hell-deserving* Creature to a *full, glorious and all-sufficient* Christ, who is most *ready* and *willing* to save. *If any Man thirst, let him come* to Christ *and drink.* Oh! come, *poor Souls*, here are *many* of us *Ambassadors* of Jesus Christ together; I trust we join most *cordially* and *affectionately* in *warning you to flee from the Wrath to come*, and in calling and inviting you to Christ. Oh! come before *the Master of the House is risen up, and has shut to the Door* (*i*) for then it will be too *late* for ever. Oh! *don't delay*, Thousands have been *ruin'd* that way. *Hear* the Lord's *Voice*, thro' his Grace, *To-day*: Oh! let there be *Joy in Heaven* over you this Day, and then I trust we shall meet e'er long in pure, perfect and eternal Glory: Which may the Lord grant, thro' Jesus Christ! *Amen* and *Amen.*

g Mark xvi. 16. *h Mat.* xi. 21, 22, 23, 24. *i Luke* xiii. 25.

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